Socialist Worker

Say No to the Joint Declaration

Socialists say No to the Major Reynolds declaration.

*It says **NOTHING** about the type of society which would exist in Ireland in the future
* It says **NOTHING** about the role of the British troops here, or about the harrassment and repression suffered every day in working class areas.
* It says **NOTHING** about poverty, discrimination, unemployment, cuts in services -- about any of the things which affect the quality of ordinary people's lives.

And what sort of 'peace' does it offer anyway? It's a peace based on keeping Catholic and Protestant working people apart, within our separate areas. The two communities would remain at loggerheads, but the conflict would be economic and social, not military. We would compete for increasingly scarce resources -- for jobs, hospitals, leisure centres. Sectarianism would continue to simmer away, ready to boil over at any time.

The Hume-Adams plan -- although they won't spell it out for the people -- is clearly shaped the same way, only with the balance tilted slightly more in favour of Catholics. This is why the supporters of Hume-Adams won't reject Major-Reynolds out of hand.

Major and Reynolds head two of the most anti-working class governments these islands have seen in recent history. They offer nothing but cuts, pay freezes and growing poverty to their 'own' working classes. Why should WE expect anything good from them?

If we reject the Declaration, what's the alternative? NOT the armed struggle. The armed struggle is futile. In so far as actions like the bombing of mainly Protestant towns or the Shankill bomb have had the effect of driving some sections of Protestant workers into the ranks of loyalist paramilitaries, it is absolutely counterproductive. And it leaves the mass of Catholic working class people as spectators instead of participants in the struggle for change.

There is, however, another alternative -- a return to the type of mass struggles that won real reforms during the early days of the Civil Rights Movement.

That type of mass action could help to take the fight against oppression out of the Catholic ghettoes and, by encouraging a general fightback against Tory policies, could involve Protestant workers.

This is not unrealistic. The Tories are in deep trouble, split from top to bottom and riven by corruption and scandals. In April the effects of the budget will be felt in people's pockets when VAT and increased National Insurance will add £12.50 to the average weekly bills. They want a pay freeze when many workers have already voted for strike action because of this year's miserly pay rises.

It we fight the Tories, not as memebers of one community or the other, but as a class united against its common enemy, we can kick them out North and South and start Protestant workers turning their backs on sectarian bigots like Paisley.

For that to happen, Catholic workers also need to break from nationalist politicians who claim that their problems will be solved by a recognition of a seperate "identity" to Protestants.

What' s needed is a socialist movement which works from below to overthrow the TWO rotten states on this island and replace them with a secular Workers Republic.

Public Meeting

NO TO THE DECLARATION

but armed struggle is not the alternative

Tues. 1st Feb.

8.00pm

The Playhouse, Artillery St.

All Welcome

If you want to join the SWM or find out more about our politics, just fill in the slip and send to SWM. P.O. Box 103, Belfast BT 15 2AB

Name.....

Address.....

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